

EXERCISE P3-2 ♦ The semicolon

To read about this topic, see sections P3-a to P3-c in *A Writer’s Reference*, Seventh Edition.

Add semicolons in the five word groups that need them; mark the other word groups “OK.” Example:

Cheryl Toussaint’s first official run was an indication of her character and determination;
no one could find fault with her effort.

1. Cheryl’s first official run — at a cross-country meet on Long Island — would certainly have impressed any coach every person watching was astounded by her perseverance.
2. Coach Thompson had warned her not to start too fast but to stay with the pack. “Just try to finish,” he said.
3. Too excited to follow his directions, Cheryl took off at top speed at the starting gun, moreover, she did not slow down even after she was a hundred yards in front of everyone else.
4. Cheryl kept that distance for most of the run, she did not allow herself any slack.
5. Then, with only a hundred yards to go, Cheryl gave out, she collapsed and fell down.
6. Immediately, she got to her knees and started crawling. She crawled toward the finish line, not toward the grassy area where runners who left the race were supposed to go.
7. She stood up, staggered a little farther, and fell again. Once more she started crawling.
8. Not able to get to her feet again, Cheryl continued to crawl, after all, she was nearly at the finish line.
9. She had almost reached the finish line when another runner passed her and won the race.
10. “I knew at that moment,” said her coach, “that this girl was going to be something special.” Her coach was right.

EXERCISE P3-3 ♦ The semicolon

To read about this topic, see sections P3-a to P3-c in *A Writer’s Reference*, Seventh Edition.

Each of the following sentences contains two semicolons but should have only one. Delete the incorrect one and replace it with other punctuation if necessary. Example:

No one else had ever seen anything special in Cheryl, who had never shown any ambition; her teachers had labeled her a “slow learner” long before she got to high school.

1. Cheryl had to beg her teachers to allow her to take college preparatory courses; they were sure she would fail; no matter how hard she tried.
2. Coach Thompson did many things for Cheryl; including coaching track, prodding her about schoolwork, encouraging good eating habits, and insisting that she think about college; most important of all, he gave her faith in herself.
3. All of the runners knew that if they made qualifying times; Coach Thompson would see to it that they were entered in the national meets; however, they also knew that if they did not qualify, they were off the team.
4. Cheryl soon discovered that she had to schedule her time; or she would fail at school or at track or at both; thinking about Coach Thompson, she began to care.
5. By the time Cheryl graduated from high school, she was an A student; this “slow learner” received an academic scholarship to New York University; although she had once thought only an athletic scholarship was possible.